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ABSTRACT

Pistoia City, Italy, has an articulated and complex system of services and educational opportunities for young children. The major tenet underlying the system is the development of a "child-friendly" city project, an educational project rooted in community and giving children a sense of belonging, and promoting the identity of the project through representative symbols. This book describes the evolution of Pistoia's system over 30 years, highlighted with numerous graphic images of the work of Andrea Rauch, including children's guides to the city and material from an art exhibit on lullabies and the history of cribs. Also described are the workshops for children, in which children bring stories they have heard from parents and grandparents to share with others. Nurseries and kindergartens are described as carefully constructed to offer an environment of well-being rather than traditionally organized educational space. Also described are children's areas in the city, which offer children an environment in which to make friends, play, and explore, and each of which includes a library and four color-coded areas: (1) arts and creativity; (2) play and communication; (3) languages, publicity, photography, and the media; and (4) nature. Efforts to make the city "child-friendly" are described, including pedestrian areas to allow children to walk to school alone, a system of children's street signs, and signs in shops identifying them as "child-friendly." The book concludes with a description of a project to use photography to tell the story of each nursery and school in the city. (KB)

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